

Community Alliance of Sarasota County

www.sarasotaalliance.net

Developmental Disabilities Strategic Planning Work Group

Sarasota County Health Department, Room 226

July 9, 2007

Meeting Summary

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Donna Betts	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Peggy Connell	Community Haven
Kathy Coiro	Children's Medical Services
Sarah Hickey	Sarasota County School Board
Peter Howard	Florida Center for Child and Family Development
Lori Lovesky	The Kidspot
Susan Magers	Sarasota County Parent Liaison
Marie Markovich	SCTI/Sarasota County School Board
Mary Smith	Family Network on Disabilities
Benny Weaver	Loveland Center
Darleen Zimmerman	Goodwill Academy

STAFF PRESENT:

Kathleen Marie Hall	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Charles Taylor	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Pauline Tracy	Sarasota County Health and Human Services

Welcome and Introductions

Peter Howard and Benny Weaver welcomed members and guests to the meeting and introductions were made.

Next Steps

Peter Howard gave an overview from the last meeting stating that the group made a recommendation to divide developmental disabilities into two categories (youth and adults), to bring the right persons to the table, and discover what the continuum of services and gaps were in Sarasota County. Peter noted that the goal of the work group was to identify the top 3 major issues facing disabled persons to recommend to the Community Alliance. Chip Taylor pointed out that the work group needs to be inclusive of persons that are directly affected by disabilities. Pauline Tracy mentioned that if the time/location does not suit those that need to be at the table, this group can send representatives to other group meetings to assist in gathering the information.

A discussion ensued with the work group on the separation of the categories. The participants asked to add a category for "young adults" as there are many gaps during the transition from youth to young adults. The group agreed that persons that were directly affected by the disabilities should be at the table but felt that late summer/early fall would be a better time-frame for a captive audience as many families were on vacation and will not

return until school is back in session. Sarah Hickey stated that the Transition Leadership Team will not resume until September. Chip stated that the two groups could hold a series of meetings beginning in late August through September.

Susan Magers reported that she recently attended the statewide disabilities summit hosted by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. Susan stated that the summit divided their categories into four sub-groups: education, healthcare, community living (birth to death), and employment.

Peter Howard asked the group to prioritize the needs according to age groups and the most pressing needs at the current time.

Children:

- Expansion of respite services
- Coordination of behavior/social support services including management of building social competency through social skills, and practice skills with continual remediation
- Coordination and communication between the school system and agencies.
- Expansion of social/leisure/recreation activities
- Continuum of services with a variety of options due to individual needs
- Education on available resources for parents/agencies/funders/citizens
- Access to resource data for all providers
- Centralize system of care for all needs/services

Young Adults:

- Expansion of respite services
- Coordination of behavior/social support services including management of building social competency through job training, social skills, and practice skills for continual remediation
- Coordination of transitional/support services (bridging the gaps) including employment and coaching services
- Expansion of social/leisure/recreation activities
- Centralize system of care for all needs/services
- Continuum of services with a variety of options due to individual needs
- Education on available resources for parents/agencies/funders/citizens

Adults:

- Affordable housing - capital and operational funding
- Coordination of behavior/social support services including management of building social competency through job training, social skills, and practice skills with continual remediation
- Transportation
- Respite services
- Centralize system of care for all needs/services
- Education on available resources for parents/agencies/funders/citizens

Mary Smith reported that as of October 2006 there were 41,884 students enrolled in the Sarasota County School system with approximately 7,200 students with developmental disabilities. Mary stated that these statistics did not include birth to three, gifted students and

students that were in private/home schools. Sarah Hickey stated that the school system can break down the data by categories. It was mentioned that the Department of Education and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation communicate through an interactive data systems.

Peter Howard asked the group to express their opinion on what the top systems issues were in Sarasota County. The participants stated that there needs to be a centralized services database for all to access, there was a lack of coordination in transition services for children to young adults, the system and funding streams were disjointed, there was little communication between agencies and the system is too complex. Pauline Tracy asked the participants to forward any current developmental disabilities data to pauline_tracy@doh.state.fl.us and she will put a list together to bring back to the next meeting. Participants suggested the following sources of data:

- Sarasota County School System
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- Manatee County - The Whole Child Project
- City of Milwaukee has a database for all human services.
- USF - "FYI Transition Program"
- Casey Foundation
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

Peter Howard stated that at the next meeting the group will continue the process to prioritize the top 3 – 5 needs and asked the group to encourage others to participate at future meetings. Peter pointed out that the hope is to continue a group meeting on a monthly basis to advocate for the developmentally disabled through one voice.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Monday, August 13 at 1:30 p.m. at The Department of Health, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Conference Room 226, Sarasota.